

Questions and Answers from the Office for Education's September 19 & 20, 2012 Requests for Qualifications (RFQ) Information Sessions

Applicable RFQs:

- ***College and Career Readiness and Planning***
- ***Expanded Learning Opportunities***
- ***Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Family Support***

Acronyms:

Office for Education (OFE)
Seattle Public Schools (SPS)
2011 Families and Education Levy (Levy)
Request for Investment (RFI)
Requests for Program Information (RFPs)
Request for Qualifications (RFQ)
Request for Investments (RFI)

DATA/TRACKING RESULTS/PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

Q: What kind of data is being requested for this RFQ process?

A: OFE is requesting data related to the characteristics of the students you serve and how they have performed as a result of your implemented strategies and interventions. The highest preference is for data from Seattle Public Schools (e.g., attendance, test results, exit tickets from classrooms, homework completion, etc.). Student and family self-reported behavioral data is also acceptable.

An organization must examine data on at least a weekly basis in order to be approved in this RFQ process.

General research is not adequate for the data request in this RFQ. If an organization has looked at program research, implemented the same programs with specific students, and collected data on the performance of those specific students, these data would be very relevant to include in your RFQ.

Q: What if my organization does not track test results or other academic results?

A: Organizations must track data related to academic behavior and/or test results at least once per week in order to be approved through the RFQ process. Applicable "academic behavior" data elements include, but are not limited to, student attendance, behavior, and discipline, as well as transition support.

Q: Our program is a summer program that only looks at data at the beginning and the end of summer. Would we be approved?

A: No. In order to be approved for Levy funds, organizations must examine data at least weekly. There are many ways to review data including: monitoring students' summer school attendance, convening teachers to discuss academic and behavioral observations, using brief in-class reading assessment to determine students' reading levels, evaluating daily "Exit Tickets" or other brief classroom assessments to determine if students have mastered standards, etc. Organizations are not required to have sophisticated data management systems, but must monitor student progress and use that information on at least a weekly basis to improve student outcomes.

Q: If an organization is working with young women of color, can it take state-wide graduation rates for young women of color to use as a comparison to their specific students in order to show success?

A: OFE strongly encourages schools/organizations to use a more closely aligned comparison group. For example, if you are working with young women of color at Franklin High School, then compare your served population to the performance of young women of color at Franklin High School overall.

Q: What kind of track record must an organization demonstrate to be approved in the RFQ process?

A: Please consult the RFQ Evaluation Criteria sheet used by RFQ evaluators included in the RFQs. Generally, organizations should have experience identifying focus students, recruiting these students into their programs, assessing their student progress, and achieving positive results similar to those outlined in the RFQs' *Outcomes and Indicators* sections.

Q: Does an organization have to have experience with SPS students?

A: No. Organizations can be approved based on previous work with students that have risk factors similar to those listed for Levy focus students.

Q: How can organizations access school/SPS data?

A: Organizations need to submit the appropriate data release consent forms to SPS for each of the students they serve. OFE is working with SPS to try to streamline the data release process for organizations approved through the RFQ process. There is also a link on the SPS website with the appropriate consent forms:

<http://www.seattleschools.org/modules/cms/pages.phtml?sessionid=&pageid=229447>.

Requests for Program Information (RFPI)—Optional

Q: Who at the schools receives the RFPI information?

A: Requests for Program Information (RFPIs) submitted by organizations approved through the RFQ process will be available on the Office for Education website for schools to view. OFE does not have other means to distribute RFPIs.

SCHOOLS (ELIGIBILITY, FUNDING, CONTRACTS, ETC.)

Q: How do schools become eligible to submit RFIs? Does the list of eligible schools change every year?

A: Elementary schools must be either a Title I school and/or a Level 1 or 2 school on the absolute results measure of the SPS segmentation report. SPS releases its segmentation report every November. Middle and high school eligibility is based on a combination of the school segmentation report and Seattle Public Schools' risk factor reports.

The list of schools that were eligible to submit Levy Innovation RFIs last year may be found below. OFE will post the list of schools eligible to apply for Innovation Levy funds on the OFE website in November.

Note: All middle schools are eligible to apply for Levy Linkage funds. The following middle schools were awarded Levy Linkage funds in SY2012-13:

- Madison
- Madrona (grades 6-8)
- McClure
- Hamilton
- Pathfinder
- South Shore
- Whitman

Elementary, Middle, and High Schools Eligible to Apply for SY2012-13 Levy Innovation funds (*Denotes schools awarded funds)		
Elementary	Middle	High
*Beacon Hill Broadview-Thomson Concord B.F. Day Dearborn Park Dunlap Emerson Gatewood Bailey Gatzert Graham Hill Hawthorne Highland Park Jane Addams Kimball Leschi *Madrona Maple Martin Luther King, Jr. John Muir	Aki Kurose *Denny Eckstein *Madison (<i>Awarded Linkage</i>) *Mercer *Washington *Whitman (<i>Awarded Linkage</i>)	Chief Sealth Cleveland *Franklin Garfield *Ingraham *Interagency Rainer Beach Secondary Bilingual Orientation Center (SBOC) South Lake *West Seattle

Northgate *Olympic Hills Orca Pinehurst Rainier View *Roxhill Sand Point Sanislo South Shore Van Asselt Viewlands West Seattle Wing Luke		
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Q: What if a school receiving Levy funds shows success and no longer meets the original eligibility criteria?

A: If an eligible school is awarded funds, demonstrates success meeting the outcome and indicator targets set forth in its annual Levy contract, and then no longer meets the eligibility criteria, funding will likely continue for the duration of the Levy.

OFE reserves the right to re-evaluate funding decisions annually based on changing eligibility criteria, implementation of SPS initiatives that may change the school's student population or needs, and a school's performance.

Q: Do schools have to apply for funding every year?

A: Once a school is selected to receive funds, it will generally continue to receive Levy funds for the duration of the Levy as long as it continues to meet its outcome and indicator targets set forth in the school's annual contract with OFE. Levy-funded schools submit an updated implementation plan and sign a revised contract with OFE annually. The annual reauthorization process is not the same as the competitive process schools complete to initially receive Levy funding.

Q: Do schools receive specific Levy funding for each category of RFQ (i.e., Middle and High School College and Career Readiness; Elementary, Middle and High School Expanded Learning Opportunities; and, Elementary, Middle and High School Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Family Support)?

A: No. Separate funding is not awarded to schools based on each of the RFQ categories. Schools submit a general budget and proposal that must address the key components of Expanded Learning Opportunities; Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Family Support; and, College and Career Readiness (MS and HS only).

Q: How much money are schools eligible to receive?

A: Funding for Innovation Elementary Schools ranges between \$200,000 - \$300,000 per school for each year of this Levy. Funding for Innovation Middle Schools ranges between \$300,000 - \$450,000 per school for each year of this Levy. Funding for Innovation High Schools ranges

between \$200,000 - \$350,000 per school for each year of this Levy. Middle School Linkage investments range between \$15,000 - \$225,000 per school for each year of this Levy.

Q: Do organizations approved through the RFQ process contract with each individual school or have one general contract with SPS for multiple schools?

A: Organizations must contract with the schools themselves unless they are participating in the Summer Learning RFI. If an organization is working with multiple schools, SPS will decide on a case-by-case basis whether to use one contract with school-specific addendums or different contracts for each school.

Q: Since only one additional Innovation High School will be chosen, should an organization working with multiple high schools only encourage the schools it considers the strongest applicants to apply?

A: OFE will post the list of eligible schools in November. OFE encourages all eligible high schools to apply.

Q: The school I work with has great need; why is it not eligible to receive Levy funds?

A: Despite the increase in funding for this Levy, need still significantly outweighs availability of funding. Given finite resources, the eligibility requirements were created to try and meet the greatest needs city-wide.

This year's list of eligible schools will be determined in November and will be posted on the OFE website.

RFQ ELIGIBILITY

Q: If an organization has summer programs, is it eligible to participate in this RFQ process?

A: Yes. There is also an entirely separate Levy fund for summer programming that will be distributed through the Summer Learning RFI. CBOs, schools, and other entities or partnerships may apply directly for funding through the Summer Learning RFI. The Summer Learning RFI will be released in October and due in November (exact dates will be forthcoming on the OFE website).

Q: Do organizations have to reapply in this RFQ process?

A: Organizations previously approved through the 2011 Levy RFQ process, do not have to reapply this year unless they would like to receive funding in another RFQ category (ex. previously approved to administer College and Career Readiness and Planning programming and would additionally like to be eligible to administer Expanded Learning Opportunities interventions). OFE reserves the right, however, to require that an organization reapply if there have been ongoing failures to meet performance targets.

Q: The RFQ categories have changed slightly from last year. If an organization was only approved in Elementary Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Family Support last year but would like to expand into providing services for Middle or High School students, does it need to reapply under the new combined category of Elementary, Middle and High School Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Family Support?

A: Yes, but the organization's RFQ submission for the different grade levels may be very similar with particular strategies differentiated for different age groups. OFE will not rescind approval for an organization that received approval for a narrower category last year if it applies again this year for expanded services.

Q: Can weekend programming be approved for Levy funds?

A: Yes.

Q: What if an organization has found a "best practice" model and wants to implement it with SPS students? Will it be approved through the RFQ process?

A: The Levy is not intended for capacity building. An organization without a proven track record of success will not be approved through the RFQ process. If, however, an organization has used a "best practice" model and implemented it successfully with Levy focus students or a group of students similar to Levy focus students, it will likely have a very strong RFQ application.

Q: How much experience does an organization need in order to be approved through the RFQ process?

A: One semester of data and greater is acceptable.

GENERAL/MISC

Q: Will there be an RFQ process each year going forward?

A: There will be capacity to evaluate organizations interested in being approved for Levy funds every year of this Levy. The qualifications will not change significantly but the process may change depending on the number of organizations interested in participating.

Q: Are last year's RFQ applications still online?

A: Yes. Applications for last year's RFQ process can be found here:
<http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/education/RFQArchive.htm>.

Submissions from organizations that were approved through last year's RFQ process can be found here: <http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/education/ApprovedAgencies.htm>.

Submissions for last year's school RFPI process can be found here:
<http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/education/ApprovedAgencies.htm>.

Q: Do organizations need to specify which school they want to work with in the RFQ application?

A: No.

Q: It seems like the Levy is interested in funding only academic programs, not enrichment programs such as music or dance. Is that correct?

A: No. The Levy is focused on academic results, but it does not specify programs or approaches. The indicators tracked include academic targets and attendance. Programs must be linked to

the stated goals of the 2011 Levy and link to at least one of the correlating outcomes and indicators (listed in all the RFQ and RFI documents).

Attendance, behavior, and discipline support, as well as transition support, are essential to supporting academic success and improving the outcomes and indicators outlined in the Levy.

Q: If an organization is currently sub-contracting with other organizations approved through last year's RFQ process, can the sub-contracting organization apply independently? If approved, can the organization continue to sub-contract with other organizations or does it have to work directly with schools?

A: Yes. An organization that sub-contracted (and received \$5,000 or less of Levy funds) last year could 1) continue to sub-contract if it does not receive more than \$5,000 in Levy funds this year or 2) apply for approval independently and have no \$5,000 limitation if it is successful in the RFQ process. All entities (subcontracted or otherwise) who wish to receive more than \$5,000 in cumulative Levy funding annually must be approved through OFE's RFQ process. Being approved for Levy funds through the RFQ process does not require any specific contracting arrangements with schools or with other community-based organizations.

Q: Is there a target number of students the Levy is trying to serve? Will approved CBOs be reporting their results back and, if so, when?

A: The Levy is intended to improve academic outcomes for focus students generally but there is no specific number of students that must be served. The [Levy Implementation Plan](#) outlines overall goals and targets.

Since the Levy funding goes through the schools, OFE will report results by school and not by organization. Schools, however, should be tracking the results of the organizations they are working with to ensure that outcomes and indicators will be met.

Q: How long do RFI grants last?

A: Once a school is selected to receive Levy funds, it will generally continue to receive Levy funds for the duration of the Levy as long as it continues to meet its outcome and indicator targets set forth in its contract.

Q: Is there one area of academic achievement that is especially emphasized within the on-time promotion outcome?

A: There is no outcome or indicator listed that is "preferred" by OFE over another outcome or indicator. Schools may choose which outcomes and indicators listed they would like to focus on.

Q: Can applications be emailed?

A: Yes. Soft and hard copies of RFQs must be submitted to OFE. An electronic copy must be emailed to EducationOffice@seattle.gov and six hard copies must be hand delivered or sent via US mail to OFE as described in the *Response Submission* sections of the RFQs.

Q: Native American students are spread throughout SPS without large concentrations in particular schools. Principals may not want to focus on this population because they only have 2 or 3 Native American students. How is the Levy addressing this problem?

A: This is a challenge that OFE and those involved with the Levy are very aware of. In an effort to address this challenge, a separate RFI was created specifically to fund Community-Based Family Support for Immigrant, Refugee and Native American students. These Levy funds do flow through schools, but are directed to community-based organizations to facilitate servicing larger concentrations of Native American students. A number of applications last year targeted immigrant and refugee students, but none were focused on Native American students and families. Funds continue to be withheld for this purpose by OFE as applicants are recruited for another RFI.

Q: Where can I get more information on the Community-Based Family Support for Immigrant, Refugee and Native American Students RFI?

A: The Community-Based Family Support for Immigrant, Refugee and Native American Students RFI will be released in the spring. Last year's RFI application can be found here: <http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/education/RFIArchive.htm#CBFS>